
 THE SEARCYS COME TO ARKANSAS

 by L. W. Searcy

The name Searcy is of Norman-French origin and was derived from the residence of its first bearers at Cerisy in Normandy. It comes from the French word Ceris which means "a notched sickle or reaping hook."

As early as 1574 Jeanne de Ceriz appears in the French records. The earliest known bearer of a form of the name from which Searcy was derived was Christopher de Cerisay, who was living in the year 1491 and at that time purchased the Barony of La Haye du Puy in lower Normandy.

The first Sarcys in America were John (1701-1787) and Phoebe Hargrove (1702-1787) from Nottingham, England, or from Wales, with a group of Huguenots or French Protestants. They arrived at the Tidewater country of Virginia in 1726, then went to Granville County, North Carolina in 1728.

About the year 1817, Richard Searcy and an older brother James and family came to Arkansas, then a part of Missouri Territory. They were the sons of Ruben (1735-1769) and Elizabeth Jet (1749-1810) and grandsons of John and Phoebe. They came by water from the headwaters of the Tennessee River to Lawrence County, which was then in Missouri Territory. Descendants of James Searcy of the name now live in Desha and Lewisville, Arkansas.

Richard Searcy came from his native Tennessee to the town of Davidsonville, county seat of Lawrence County, when he was 21 years old. He was appointed the first Clerk of the Courts in 1817. Arkansas Territory was formed by Act of Congress March 2, 1819, and the Act became effective July 4, 1819. Independence County was constituted by Act of the Territorial Legislature October 20, 1820, and, according to the official records, Richard Searcy became the first Clerk of the new county. Searcy served as Clerk of Lawrence County, Missouri, for the years 1817 and 1818 and after Arkansas Territory was organized he was Clerk of Lawrence County, Arkansas, in 1819 and Independence County, Arkansas in 1820 and 1821. When the first Territorial Legislature met at Arkansas Post on February 7, 1820, he was made its secretary. The same honor was given him by the second Legislature which convened on October 2, 1821.

In 1823 President Monroe appointed Searcy one of the judges in the Territory of Arkansas. He must have served the entire northeast part of the Territory. He was followed in the office by James Woodson Bates for whom Batesville is named. Searcy County, Arkansas was named in honor of Richard Searcy. No other state has a Searcy County, but Arkansas has had two Searcy Counties, both named for Richard Searcy. On November 3, 1835 Governor Fulton signed an Act of the last Territorial Legislature creating Searcy County, but the first State Legislature changed its name to Marion County. In December 1838 the Legislature passed and Governor Conway signed an Act cutting off the south half of Marion County and making it the present Searcy County.

 ORANGE COUNTY CALIFORNIA
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In the old cemetery at Batesville that was abandoned years ago because the town had grown up around it until the cemetery was in the heart of the city, there stands near the sidewalk on the west side of College Avenue a marble slab bearing this inscription: "Sacred to the Memory of Richard Searcy Who Departed this Life on the 25th Day of December 1832 in the 36th Year of his Age. He was a native of Tennessee and emigrated to Arkansas in 1817."

Alford Harrison Searcy (born in North Carolina 1824; died in Springdale 1908) and wife Temperance Caroline Price (1829-1908) with three sons (Lee W., W. H., W. O.) and three daughters, all born at Spring Place, Murry County, Georgia, came to Washington County, Arkansas, in the fall of 1859 from Elijah Gilmer County, Georgia. Alford H. Searcy was a grand-nephew of Richard Searcy.

A. H. Searcy enlisted as Orderly Sergeant in Company E, First Battalion, Arkansas Confederate Cavalry, at Fayetteville on October 9, 1861. He was trained at Camp Murphy near Keetsville, Mo. and fought in the battle of Pea Ridge. He served one year and was given an honorable discharge which was signed by Col. "Ras" Stirman and Maj. Gen. Sterling Price, dated October 9, 1862. In 1863 he re-enlisted and served until the close of the war.

A. H. Searcy was the son of Hiram Searcy (1796-1857) and Anna DeBard (1804-1894) who owned and operated spinning mills in Atlanta, Rome and Savannah. The mills were burned in 1865.

EARLY RECORDS OF ARKANSAS COUNTY

We have received a copy of the July 1961 issue of the Historical Bulletin published by the Grand Prairie Historical Society. Editor is Boyd W. Johnson, St. Charles, Ark. The issue contains much valuable source material pertaining to Arkansas County, especially the early JP records, county clerk and probate records, and tax list for 1819. Some of our readers may be interested in the following early marriage records ("Serremoneys"):

- Mar. 26, 1810 - James Waterman and Francois Michel, by Andre Fagot JP
 - June 6, 1811 - Louis Bogy and Francois Michel, widow of James Waterman, by Andre Fagot, JP
 - June 6, 1811 - Elisha Wilborn and Anne Frazer, by Andre Fagot JP
 - June 19, 1811 - Martin Huckington and Elisabeth Trimble, by Andre Fagot JP
 - June 19, 1811 - David Huckington and Sarah Farriell, by Andre Fagot JP
 - May 30, 1816 - John Hamberton and Elizabeth Coulter, by P.H. Bennett JP
 - Feb. 18, 1818 - Wm. Newton and Susanna Coulter, by P.H. Bennett JP
- And the Young girls, all married by Peter Bennett JP:
- June 2, 1816 - William Ward and Peggy Young
 - June 5, 1816 - William Peterson and Susanna Young
 - Apr. 23, 1817 - Elijah Bunch and Nancy Young
 - May 19, 1817 - Daniel Emberson and Sally Young

But the marriage record that intrigues us is that of Dec. 28, 1818 - KICABULL HUBBLE and Sally Mills. Maybe Kicabull is a misspelling for Kissable! We hope so.

Our congratulations to the Grand Prairie Historical Society (Frank C. Wolfe, president, Gillett, Ark.) for the best issue to date of its always interesting Bulletin.



Lee W. and W. H. Searcy



Mr. and Mrs. Alfred H. Searcy



Lee W. Searcy
Born 1847 in
Springplace, Ga.
Died 1894



W. H. Searcy
Born 1850 at Springplace, Ga.
Died 1920 at Springdale, Ark.



W. O. Searcy
Born 1859 in
Springplace, Ga.
Died 1926 at
Springdale, Ark.